

## Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 SS-15 CIAE-00 PM-04  
H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01  
SP-02 ERDA-05 AID-05 CEA-01 COME-00 EPG-02 EB-07  
FPC-01 INT-05 OMB-01 OES-07 STR-04 TRSE-00  
ACDA-07 FEA-01 DLOS-09 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00  
INRE-00 /130 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/AFN:ALEGGIO:PAW  
APPROVED BY P:PCHABIB  
NEA:NAVELIOTES

-----030030Z 045755 /64

O 022341Z JUN 77  
FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
TO AMEMBASSY TUNIS IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
AMEMBASSY ROME  
AMEMBASSY VALLETTA  
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK  
CINCEUR  
CINCSNAVEUR  
SECDEF

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, ENRG, TS, LY

SUBJECT: TUNISIAN-LIBYAN CONTINENTAL SHELF DISPUTE:  
UNDER SECRETARY HABIB'S MEETING WITH TUNISIAN AMBASSADOR  
HEDDA ON JUNE 2

1. HEDDA REQUESTED AN URGENT MEETING WITH HABIB THIS  
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MORNING. HE RECOUNTED HIS MEETING IN TULSA WITH READING  
AND BATES REPRESENTATIVES AND RENEWED HIS GRATITUDE FOR  
THE "FANTASTIC" SUPPORT GIVEN BY DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS  
AND SENATOR BARTLETT AT THE MEETING.

2. HE SAID THAT HE CALLED PRIME MINISTER NOUIRA AND PASSED  
ON READING AND BATES REQUEST FOR AN "EIGHT-DAY" TIME SPAN

IN ORDER FOR THE COMPANY TO CONSULT WITH LIBYAN NATIONAL OIL CO. HE SAID THAT NOUIRA REMAINED ADAMANT THAT THE GOT WAS NOT TAKING ORDERS ON ITS "SOVEREIGNTY" FROM AN AMERICAN OIL COMPANY. HEDDA RECOUNTED READING AND BATES' FAILURE TO DISCLOSE THE COMMENCEMENT OF DRILLING PROCEDURES AS A BLACK MARK AGAINST ITS TRUSTWORTHINESS.

3. HABIB RECOUNTED OUR POSITION AND SAID WE WOULD CONTINUE TO PRESSURE THE FIRM TO WITHDRAW AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AND TELL THEM NOT "TO STRING OUT" THE PROCESS OF CONSULTATION WITH THE LIBYANS. HABIB STATED THAT HE REALIZED THE GOT

FEARED A FAIT ACCOMPLI BUT ANY RESORT TO FORCE WOULD NOT BE IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF THE GOT AT THIS TIME, ESPECIALLY NOTING THE DISPARITY OF MILITARY HARDWARE ON BOTH SIDES, AND REQUESTED HEDDA TO TELL NOUIRA THAT TUNISIA'S GOOD FRIEND, THE USG, NOT AN AMERICAN FIRM, IS ASKING THE GOT TO ALLOW THESE EIGHT DAYS FOR READING AND BATES TO TRY AND FIND A SOLUTION. HEDDA SAID HE WOULD INFORM NOUIRA IMMEDIATELY OF THE REQUEST. HABIB AGAIN ITERATED THE USG'S LACK OF LEGAL RECOURSE IN FORCING THE AMERICAN FIRM TO REMOVE ITS RIG FROM THE AREA OR IN DEMANDING THAT THE U.S. CITIZENS ABOARD THE RIG DEPART, IF THEY DON'T WISH TO. (FYI - FIRM ASKED FOR UP TO TEN DAYS; HEDDA IS CONFUSING THIS REQUEST WITH COMMENTS MADE TO HIM BY SENATOR BARTLETT. IN ANY EVENT, THE TIMEFRAME--NOT EXACT NUMBER OF DAYS--IS IMPORTANT THING NOW.)

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4. AFTER THE MEETING, DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY VELIOTES WAS CALLED BY CHARLES THORNTON, PRESIDENT OF READING AND BATES, WHO SAID THAT LIBYAN NATIONAL OIL CO. HAS AGREED TO A MEETING IN LONDON ON THIS SUNDAY OR MONDAY MORNING. THORNTON FELT THIS WAS A POSITIVE STEP. VELIOTES INFORMED THORNTON OF HABIB'S REQUEST TO GOT TO COMPLY WITH FIRM'S REQUEST FOR MORE TIME. NOTING HE WAS SPEAKING ON INSTRUCTIONS OF UNDER SECRETARY HABIB, HE AGAIN EXPRESSED THE DEPARTMENT'S DESIRE TO SEE THE SHIP WITHDRAW FROM THE DISPUTED AREA AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AND CAUTIONED FIRM AGAINST UNDUE DELAY IN RESOLVING SITUATION. THORNTON ASKED THAT ALL CONCERNED BE ASSURED FIRM WAS MOVING TO CONSULT WITH LIBYANS ASAP.(THIS WAS CONFERENCE CALL WITH FOUR DIRECTORS OF COMPANY).

5. AT THE NOON PRESS BRIEFING TODAY, QUESTIONS ON THE DISPUTE WERE RAISED AND RESPONDED TO ACCORDING TO OUR PRESS GUIDANCE. TEXT WILL BE INCLUDED IN DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING OF JUNE 2 TELEGRAM. HEDDA HAS INFORMED US THAT HE IS PREPARING A PRESS BACKGROUNDER AND WILL

BE INTERVIEWED TONIGHT BY TIME MAGAZINE.(WE HAVE GIVEN  
TEXT OF DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING TO HEDDA.)

6. DEPARTMENT IS POUCHING TODAY TO EMBASSY TUNIS, FOR  
INFO, VARIOUS MEMORANDA CONCERNING DEVELOPMENTS OCCURING  
HERE.

7. HEDDA HAS JUST INFORMED VELIOTES THAT HE PASSED  
HABIB'S MESSAGE TO NOUIRA. NOUIRA SAID HE WOULD DO HIS  
BEST TO KEEP SITUATION UNDER CONTROL DURING PERIOD  
REQUESTED BY COMPANY. VANCE

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## Message Attributes

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**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
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**Errors:** N/A  
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**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
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**Subject:** TUNISIAN-LIBYAN CONTINENTAL SHELF DISPUTE: UNDER SECRETARY HABIB'S MEETING WITH TUNISIAN AMBASSADOR HEDDA ON JUNE 2  
**TAGS:** PFOR, ENRG, TS, LY  
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**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
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